

# JACK

EVENING GAZETTE, Saturday, Jan. 11, 1975 3



# CHARLTON

LEAGUE'S TOP BOSS SPEAKS OUT!

## WELL DONE, WYCOMBE

ONE of the most gratifying things about the FA Cup third-round replay with Wycombe Wanderers here at Ayresome Park on Tuesday night was the reception our crowd gave them at the end of the game—and those 11 Wycombe lads thoroughly deserved every bit of recognition they received during the match and at the end of our 1-0 win.

They caused us a lot of problems in the first game, when we shared a goalless draw on their ground. Again they worked very hard in this replay. In fact they made the result very respectable because of their work and their effort, and the crowd rose to them.

I don't think anybody could say we didn't create sufficient chances to have won handsomely — but Wycombe came out of the game with a lot of credit.

However, the fact remains that I am also very proud of our lads and the way they stuck to their task when things were going against them.



Chances that would normally have gone in were saved, or hit the woodwork. But our lads never lost their balance and they kept playing with as much enthusiasm and effort as I could have wished for.

Well done, Wycombe. You deserved your plaudits. And we at Middlesbrough are glad to see the back of you!

It was left to (as the lads call him) my Little Gem—David Armstrong—to win us the game. He showed great composure and presence of mind to put the ball where he wanted to and so clinch victory for us.

In singling out David, you will excuse me. I have never known our lads, since the day I arrived here, so on edge before their games as in the two we've played against Wycombe. And in my mind, I could understand their apprehension.

But their discipline was good and this was what got them through in the end.

When we talk about non-League football we tend to say "amateurs", and we tend to say that amateurs are the lads who turn out on Saturdays after a skinful of beer. But now, all are called players.

A number of the Wycombe lads would probably grace professional clubs. But they decided that professional football was not for them and that they would prefer to play it at semi-professional or amateur level.



Most of them have got good jobs. They play the game wholeheartedly, and with a love for it. Football in this country is not just for the professional game, it is for the amateur game as well.

When we say amateurs, we are really using the wrong word, of course. It should, as I said, be players — and the players of Wycombe commanded the respect of us all by the quality of their effort.

There are many more amateur clubs like this and I am sure we shall see a lot of them humble First Division sides over the next few years. I am glad we were not one of them.

In the final analysis we are through to the fourth round of the FA Cup and we are home to Sunderland. I love big games — and this will be a big game!

It will be a full house, and for the first time in a while we shall really get our supporters behind us.

For too many years Ayresome Park has had spaces. The big game, the big atmosphere — those are what this game is about. The cheer that went up on the bus from our lads when the draw for the fourth round came over the air had to be heard to be believed. I am not going to anticipate the result but, as I say, we get everybody at it with competitive games like this.

● Jack Charlton talking to Cliff Mitchell.

Glad  
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